



# THE POEMS OF LUCILE DU PRÉ





LIBRARY

Brigham Young University

RARE BOOK COLLECTION

Rare

PS

3507

.U76

P6

1923







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
Brigham Young University

<https://archive.org/details/poemsofluciledup00dupr>





## ERRATA

Page 19, fourth line from bottom —

for “*to life*” read “*to lift*.”

Page 75, third line from top —

for “*the light*” read “*thy light*.”



POEMS OF LUCILE DU PRÉ







LUCILE DU PRÉ

81  
D928 P

P O E M S  
OF  
LUCILE DU PRÉ

*With an Introduction by*

KATHARINE LEE BATES



B. J. BRIMMER COMPANY

BOSTON

1923

Copyright 1923  
BY B. J. BRIMMER COMPANY  
Printed January, 1923

Printed in the United States  
of America  
PRESS OF N. A. LINDSEY AND COMPANY, INC.  
MARBLEHEAD, MASS.

For permission to reprint  
certain poems in this  
book thanks are due *The  
Century Magazine*



## CONTENTS

---

*Introduction by Katharine Lee Bates*

### I. SAINT GEDULA

- Circe, 17
- Sagittarius, 21
- For Each, 22 ✓
- The Tortoise, 23
- “Karma,” 25
- The Elf Coaxes the Lady, 26
- Through Folded Nights, 29
- Bridal Song, 30

### II. THE SHINING LIGHT

- By a Hill Stream, 33
- Flamma Vestalis, 35 ✓
- July, 36
- Elf-Song, 37 ✓
- The Fifth Wind, 38
- Saint Gedula in the Forest, 39
- The Rivals, 40
- There is a Painting, 41
- God Lets Me Help Her, 42
- Easter-Even, 43

### III. THE ELF EXPLAINS

- The Forest of Mâya, 47
- A Crest of the Wave, 50
- The Berries, 51
- Failure, 52
- Ancient Faith, 54
- The Elf Explains, 55
- Let Me Go Free, 57
- Jacob Stainer, 58

### IV. SILVER PINIONS

- Judas, 61
- Silver Pinions, 62
- The Shepherd of Stars, 63
- His Voice Calls, 64
- Rhymes, 65
- Compensation, 66
- The Command, 67
- The Lark, 68
- Far-Flung, 69
- The Swaying Tree-Tops, 70
- The Neophyte, 71

## V. THE HERMETIC HYMN

- The Hermetic Hymn, 75
- The Butterfly, 77
- The Rainbow, 78
- Prairie Chant, 79
- The Day Wanes, 80
- The High Code, 81
- The Poem, 82
- They Say He Lies Asleep, 83 ✓
- Voices, 84
- Understanding, 86

## VI. THE STILL LIGHT

- Why Dost Thou Smile, 89
- The Release, 90
- Loosen These Knots, 92
- Fleet, So Fleet, 93
- Elf Song, 94
- Sonnet of Courage, 95
- The Forging, 96
- The Still Light, 97
- Postponement, 98
- The Gift of the Rose, 99

## VII. WINGS OF FLAME

- The Summer Day, 103
- Kuen-Lun, 105
- I Will Not Fear This Space, 106 ✓
- Wings of Flame, 107
- Forgotten Fires, 108
- The Guardian's Voice, 109
- Shining Mystery, 111
- The Gift, 112
- Undine to the Earth-Child, 113
- Death Song, 114

## FOREWORD

THE author of this book it was never my privilege to meet in the body, but I gladly pay homage to the spirit here revealed. The biographical sketch written by the poet's close friend tells of long labor and eager aspiration baffled, the promise of a brilliant career suddenly cut off. Upon a violinist, rarely endowed and elaborately trained, illness laid, at the very threshold of triumph, the hand of imperative arrest. But there was "the high code." Not adjuring music, like the broken-winged lark of her lyric, she turned from those enchanting strings, whose magic she had mastered, to poetry, not for lamentations, but as a new outlet for the surging waves of rhythm that possessed her soul.

Only here and there, as in the poem on Jacob Stainer, violin-maker of the seventeenth century, does the frustrated vocation peep out, and then with

a gallant rather than grieving look. The love poems, too, are of love unfulfilled:

*“Forever we were but a breath,  
But a word or a look apart;  
You waited too late, well-beloved.  
Death knocked at my heart.”*

But these “silver pinions” lift even death to a divine adventure:

*“I will not fear this space,  
Chaos, nowhere to cling!  
On outspread wing,  
Dauntless and clear I sing,  
Lonely I seek thy face.”*

The religious note in these poems throbs from the patient faith of His Voice Calls through the holy passion of Easter Even to intimate communion:

“Loosen these bonds that I have tangled so,  
Lift Thou my brother’s burden that I could not bear!  
Master, I can but worship, can but know  
That Thou wilt pray for me and be my prayer.”

The poet’s fine culture reaches beyond the Greek, even beyond her adorable Hermes, The Shep-

herd of Stars, and his mother, Maya Compassionate, to the ancient thought of India. Her delight in nature goes singing all the way from “white-wreathed orchards” and the “robin’s lordly call” to shining Sagittarius of the seven arrows. The Celtic spell has touched her, too, and all through nature she hears “the wild call of Faerie.” But the range of her sympathies is widest of all, embracing not only Saint Gedula but the pagan priestess of Flamma Vestalis, not only Judas Iscariot but lonesome little elves.

*“We have no elfin motherling  
To sing when sunlight dies,  
To kiss us when the church bells ring  
And star-dew stings our eyes.”*

This volume is as a small flask of precious ointment, quintessence of a beautiful life.

KATHARINE LEE BATES.



*I.*

*SAIN T GEDULA*



## CIRCE

Men call me “Wise King Ulysses;”  
Along these coasts of oak and pine,  
Which hoard red honey for the bees  
And sweet grass for the fattening kine,  
They prate still—they be simple folk—  
Of deeds of prowess long since mine,  
*Our home is free from phantasies,*  
*Eros hath shown great mercy.*

Friends meet here at our year’s decline,  
“No traveler now our Ulysses;”  
They chat and drive afar the swine,  
Whose presence doth breed maladies.  
*Whence comes that magic jasmined breeze*  
*Again—sweet quivering mysteries*  
*From yon blue isle of sorceries*  
*Echo a laugh divine!*

*The looms of twilight wove her hair,  
Her voice was violet breath;  
To hold her were a god's despair,  
Her flower-kiss was death;  
Oh Circe, Circe!  
Strange sea blooms on her bosom lay,  
(Snow o' the foam most bitter sweet)  
I could not bear what men would say,  
I tore my coward soul away  
From love, immortal, glorious.*

Nay, now no more of memories!  
Penelope's dear hand in mine,  
We count these drunken humming bees  
Athwart the swinging cypress vine,  
Her slave girls bring quaint tapestries  
With song and perfumed wine.  
*Echoes of booming faerie seas  
Crash down the long coast line.  
Eros, have mercy!*

*No spell she wove, that deathless maid,  
Yet each brute soul shook horribly;  
We were of all men's shame afraid,  
Her strange voice stung and scorched and flayed,  
Through some relentless melody.*

*Oh Circe, Circe!*

*Her deep eyes shone above her prey,  
They huddled snarling at her feet,  
Held by those sea-fraught eyes at bay;  
Her flooding voice that bade me stay  
Yet throbs with each heart-beat.*

*Gods, for a storm to life this gloom—  
To fling me to yon azure room—  
To sweep forth this wild sea perfume—  
Have mercy, Eros!*

The thrysus on my heart was laid,  
A deep resistless mystery.  
Mid taunting, wind-flung mockery  
I held my course—I chose the way  
Of weariness and slow-drawn breath  
For this poor form which perisheth;  
By haunting shadows undismayed  
Here will the King greet hoary Death!  
Go little errant waves, to stray  
And curl about her feet!

## SAGITTARIUS

Seven were the arrows  
In the fairy hunter's quiver,  
Given by the Siddhe  
Ere they went away from men;  
Strength and joy and craft and courage,  
Songs to praise each giver,  
Patience with the quarry—  
Yea, and pity for the slain.

Yet never sped his shafts of light  
Across the gulfs of æther,  
The clanging of his hunting horn  
The Siddhe heard no more;  
Forgetting and forgotten  
Dreams the hunter by a river  
Brimming with the tears and mirth  
Of all the days of yore.

## FOR EACH

The sky for the bird whose wings  
    Beat through the morning air,  
The sea for the strange sea-things  
    That know nor joy nor care;  
You for my soul that brings  
    Such thoughts, that the still air sings  
The magic of myriad springs  
    Around you—about you—above—  
From the Infinite Heart of Love!

## THE TORTOISE

"As he stepped over the threshold of the high-roofed cave, he found a tortoise there, and with the shell and with the reeds cut to measure, he fashioned a lovely plaything; at the touch of his hands it sounded marvelously."

*From the Homeric Hymn to Hermes.*

Earth and sky were void of meaning,  
Without thought or voice or impulse to aspire,  
Till you came, oh Winged Spirit,  
—Till you came—  
Morning-eyed in mystic splendour  
With your wand of waving flame,  
With your lightning striking chaos to desire.

There in nothingness I drifted,  
Dumb, unlovely spawn of ocean's slime and shame;  
Then you came, oh Music-Maker;  
—Then you came—  
And you stooped to lift me higher  
With the touch of spirit fire,  
While your voice of molten glory shaped my frame.

First fire-bringer from far heavens,  
Leading, stirring, guiding, lashing tongue of flame!  
Out of darkness you have brought me  
Fashioned me and softly wrought me  
To an instrument joy-giving,  
—Hermes Lyre—  
Dowered with your inner wisdom  
And a voice of mist and fire,  
Now I echo back your thrice-majestic name!

## “K A R M A”

Deep in her house of death  
Dreaming I found her;  
Knelt and prayed fervently  
Rose and unbound her.

Mâya Compassionate,  
Star of the Sea,  
Now in thy house of Life  
She hath forgotten me.

Thou who art heaven's breath,  
Thine be her liberty;  
Bound in the house of death  
Still I pray steadfastly.

## THE ELF COAXES THE LADY

Be patient, dear, and I will find you  
a flower, so sweet—so sweet that you  
Will be glad that you waited;  
Do not mind if these torn hands have bruised it,  
And look never behind at the little red marks  
of my footsteps in the deep-gathered snow  
Of the forest.

You will laugh when the drops of my heart's blood  
have turned into bright gleaming berries—  
You and the shy dark-eyed squirrels  
Need plenty of berries each winter.  
Or wait, dear, and I will weave you a love-song  
as closely as bird-nests are woven,  
Guarding their well-hidden treasure.

Be seated and watch with kind eyes  
while my fingers, long-skilled in such labor,  
    Fashion a poem of gladness  
With soft-curving delicate phrases;  
As deft and as fleet are my fingers  
    as ever the wings of the swallow,  
As gay and as bright are my fancies  
    As the breast of the oriole in April.

But do not look back at the shadows  
or notice what lurks in the branches  
    Or slips through the scattered leaf driftings;  
See, all that is needed I've gathered—  
    Now the joy of the weaving together!  
    Look, dear, at the song nearly finished—  
As light as the meadow lark's music,  
    As pure as the breast of the snow-bird.

Why are the deeps of your eyes close-curtained as  
twilight?

What have I done with my singing  
That shook back your soul into silence?  
You gather your long cloak about you  
And pass through the woods as a stranger;  
Around me the eddying leaves are whispering slyly  
together,  
Above in the storm-tossed branches  
the nests are deserted, forsaken;  
My flower—my berries—my poem!

## THROUGH FOLDED NIGHTS

Through folded nights  
And blossomy days  
We think on His most gracious ways;  
By sun and moon  
And keen star-rays  
And Easter Lily mysteries,  
How shall His own  
Shine forth His praise?

## BRIDAL SONG

Awake! awake with the April swallows,  
The meadows yearning, the forests bare,  
The streams returning by hills and hollows  
To earth as an answered prayer!

Arise, arise! by the snows' redeeming  
The springs are filling, the orchards white;  
Arise, for thine eyes that have ceased their dreaming  
Are thrilling with new delight.

Rejoice! rejoice that thy heart is flinging  
Her portals wider than earth or sea!  
Rejoice, for the voice of thy soul is singing  
Aloud in her ecstasy!

*II.*

*THE SHINING LIGHT*



## BY A HILL STREAM

Ever the stream  
Glistens and darkens in mystical measure,  
Alternates pauses and flight  
With sudden cool silences, marking a theme  
Beyond understanding, yet hinting of treasure  
Past hoarding or spending;  
Guarding the secret in runes of delight  
Overwoven with rhythms unending.

Slowly the rushes  
Caught in mid-current, swaying and swinging,  
Endlessly to and fro,  
Drift where a delicate willow-wand brushes  
Over the torrent of waters, low-singing,  
Laughing with mirth,  
Splashing and spraying the mosses that grow  
Close to the sweet-smelling earth.

Quiet, the pool  
Dappled with shadows of Time's steady flight,  
    Holds in each multiple gleam  
The colours of opaline dawn, sweet and cool,  
In sun-tinted, star-glittered circles of light;  
    Hesitant ever,  
Yet bringing and flinging them deftly, the stream  
    Weaves daylight and darkness together.

Echoes of Heaven,  
Float the pale colours of soft fading skies,  
    Evermore distant and lonely,  
The deep diapason of pine trees at even  
Chants of the Spirit while star-tapers rise;  
    Stillness is best:  
The voice of the silence is music heard only  
    When hearts are at rest.



I walk in shadows sorrow-crowned,  
Along these ancient temple-walls  
Soft echoes follow and the sound -  
Of alien Music calls,

Here I dream through sinless days,  
And pallid nights - afar from those  
New strings of priestesses whose praise  
Mounts to their God - who knows?

Dark are these altars ever more -  
Long ages since our gods are flown:  
None worships by this temple-door  
But I alone.

I will be faithful to the end  
But where this God Christ should be -  
I pray Him for my heart's first friend  
Jesus hath forgotten me.

---

## FLAMMA VESTALIS

I walk in shadows, sorrow-crowned,  
Along these ancient temple walls;  
Soft echoes follow and the sound  
Of alien music calls.

Alone I dream through endless days  
And pallid nights—apart from those  
White throngs of souls, whose Christian praise  
Ascends from where their altar glows.

Dark are my altars evermore,  
Long ages since my gods have flown;  
None worships at the temple door  
Where I abide alone.

One must be faithful to the end;  
Yet—if their Saviour-God should be,  
I pray His peace for my heart's friend.  
—Zeus hath forgotten me!

## JULY

The larch tops tremble against the sky,  
Shimmer and sway in their own delight;  
Far out where the feathery branches lie  
The still blue air burns white.

## ELF - SONG

They promised me a little Harp,  
A Harp of gold with seven strings:  
I who was free a fairy child  
Sat covetous with folded wings—  
I who had danced with Northern Lights,  
And known the song the South Wind sings  
Of ecstasy on ecstasy!

They gave a human name to me  
I have forgotten. Day by day  
Echoed their words of *Love* and *Fame*,  
Of *Hope* and *Fear*, till far away  
Rang the wild call of Faerie,  
And o'er the dreaming hills of May  
I fled from their captivity.

## THE FIFTH WIND

Oh the wonder and power of the Fifth Wind!  
It gives the breath and motion to the sea-waves,  
It pushes on the slowly moving rivers,  
Gently it presses on the feathery shadow-grasses  
And circles the ample forests.

And when into the wide field of the sky  
We step far past the blue rim of the years  
Leaving every wall of clay behind us,  
Poised and unafraid we shall stand waiting  
For the coming of the Fifth Wind.

Even now at any open window  
While we watch the dawning-hour holy,  
Soft-petalled, rose-flushed, light-suffused,  
Something better than earth's best is blown in to us:  
We are flooded with the strength of the Fifth Wind.

## SAINT GEDULA IN THE FOREST

"Saint Gedula is often represented on her way to the Church of Moorzeola, in her right hand a candle and her left a lamp, which demons endeavor to extinguish."

Among these moon-white, strange, enchanted flowers,  
So fraught with longing is their magic breath,  
Those who forget to keep their torchlight burning  
Might stray forever here, forgot of death.

Where is the Guide who saves us from dream-madness?

(Each chalice of these flowers holds despair)  
This moonlight drowns the soul in waves of passion  
And stops the keen vibration of white prayer.

Were there no waking world beyond the forest  
Still is my heart forevermore a shrine,  
Where neither dream mists nor these pale enchantments  
Can quench the inner radiance that is mine.

## THE RIVALS

So thou hast sought my Lady's heart,  
Tyrant Death!

Caught and tamed till it dare not start  
And tremble when I call, Love saith.

What wouldst Thou with her shimmering hair,  
Miser Death?

Treasure enough hast Thou to spare  
This my living gold, Love saith.

Four white doves are her hands and feet,  
See, oh Death!

There are no lotus buds more sweet,  
But they rest too still, Love saith.

This I know, that her love is mine!

Hear, Oh Death!

That have I for my part divine,  
Take Thou the rest, Love saith.

## THERE IS A PAINTING

There is a painting by a friend of ours,  
So like your writing. How shall one explain?  
Strange veils of mist and fog blow through these  
bowers  
And tangled long threads of rain;  
The drenched spent flowers lie drowning,  
So meek—for all their pride—beneath the praying  
pines  
Who lift austere strained arms in vain.  
No human heart dare bring compassion near,  
No mortal hands could push the fogs aside;  
—What if a star might enter very clear,  
With mirth for shadows, joy for light denied  
And for dead flowers, frankincense and myrrh?  
None hides from star-light, for a star dreads none—  
Both night and day Love's miracles occur,  
And day or night the stars guide every one,  
Taking no toll beyond the right to serve  
Star fashion, free, obedient to God's Will  
That uses each for good, that grants each prayer.  
Oh very Dear, the star knows not of earth, or any ill,  
Or loss or gain, but loves still everywhere.

## GOD LETS ME HELP HER

God lets me help her  
And my soul spreads wings  
Strong and protecting, clean as mountain snow,  
Fleet for love's tireless toil;  
Singing I cross the plains and forest fir,  
Praying I pass the sea of man's turmoil  
Pouring out songs of gladness, note on note.

God lets me hurt her  
And I quench the spark  
Of human love that blinds my heavenly sight;  
Back to our God I fold these wings of night,  
Hush the pure music welling to my throat.

## EASTER-EVEN

He walketh the starry spaces,  
He climbeth the awful heights,  
    Oh follow Him—follow Him on!  
Forgotten the mad earth-faces,  
Forsaken the sad earth places,  
Unbound from the earth's delights  
    He goeth beyond the dawn.

But now He was here among us,  
Our earth and sea at His feet;  
    Oh where hath the Master gone?  
Strange were the songs He sung us,  
Precious the gifts He flung us,  
And the look in His eyes was sweet  
    As the look of the skies at morn.

We dreaded His wild sweet dreaming,  
And His voice that our souls adore  
    Now silent since yestermorn;  
For need of His love far-streaming,  
And the love-light of His eyes deep-gleaming,  
That thrilled to our Hearts' dark core,  
We wait by a cross forlorn.  
Oh follow Him, Brothers, follow Him,  
    Follow Him evermore!

*III*

*THE ELF EXPLAINS*



## THE FOREST OF MÂYA

Would you know the forest of Mâya?

Come with me there at twilight  
When the stars first glimmer  
through its solemn aisles,  
And the moon leans wistfully  
across the pale cloud bars  
To light the forest depths.

In that wood I know  
better than the house-holder knows his home,  
Better than mine own soul,  
no mortal foot has pressed the sweet wild grasses,  
No earthly hand has pushed aside  
the waving veils of purple shifting mosses:  
Scarce heavier than festoons of woven gloom  
they droop and sway along the forest aisles,  
But darker they are—and heavier—  
than the nebulous shadows  
That pass all the night long  
down vistas remote and intangible  
As the devious ways of the dream world.

In the heart of the forest a pool shines,  
fed from a hidden spring;  
Ferns and little star-eyed mosses  
grow thickly to its edge,  
The tall sprays over-arch the dimpling water,  
whose tiny circles all reflect  
The spreading circles of the trees above them,  
From the overflowing brim  
A limpid stream goes whispering  
with tender murmurs, unintelligible  
Until one has seen the face  
reflected in its shining mirror—  
The face of the Lady of the Forest.

Here at eventide,  
with the last bird notes over-head  
And the breath of white violets about her feet.  
She comes to the quiet pool  
That even in its dreams the night-long tells of her.  
Lonely and happy, being Joy herself,  
Over the lapping waters she leans singing:  
Velvet-throated is she, so that the wood-dove  
Leaves its dear nest for love of her strange songs;  
The little restless stream waits silently,  
Trembling and treasuring her golden-throated music  
as human hearts echo and re-echo  
The voice of the beloved.

Through dusky garments, silver-threaded,  
woven of glistening moon-beams and of shadows,  
Gleams out the clear perfection of her body  
parting the darkness like a star.  
She shakes the purple iris and the fern-wreath  
from the dim splendour of her hair,  
And when the veils of twilight are withdrawn  
she will descend into the quivering pool  
To lie at ease among the water-lilies  
in the white fire of the risen moon,  
Lulled by the bubbling murmur of the pool, spring-fed,  
the endless rush and flutter of little forest winds  
And the deep slow breaths of night.

All day the pool has kept  
the color of her eyes;  
Now it is black as ebony,  
surging and circling  
Against the water-lilies  
and against the silver radiance of her breast.  
She is safe-folded from the light of waking worlds,  
a secret hidden in the dream  
Which I have dreamt and shown to you  
while we two wandered  
Within the magic woods of Mâya.

## A CREST OF THE WAVE

A crest of the wave upblown  
Is my brother the bird overhead  
And ever the sea makes moan:  
I have heard what the Sea Mother said  
All day in a monotone.

## THE BERRIES

Oh remember but the berries,  
All the little red, red berries  
Hidden clustering in their covert  
By the sweet and patient hill,  
Glistening, twinkling, with the dew-drops  
Clinging to their elfin faces,  
Nodding, trembling in the twilight,  
Innocent of good or ill.

Do they tremble at some stirring  
In the dim protecting twilight  
Which enfolds them cradled happily  
Upon the dear hills' breast?  
Does the mighty life tide surging  
Lift them from their seedling playground.  
And the call of conscious being  
Breaks their long pre-natal rest?

## FAILURE

I called your name once soft and low,  
That only you might make reply;  
I heard my voice fall quietly  
Along the air waves' endless flow  
As dead leaves drift in undertow,  
And you passed by.

Then through mine eyes I called to you,  
And waited prayerful as fields lie  
Thirst smitten knowing they must die  
Without the blessing of the dew—  
So stricken, Love, I looked on you  
Yet no reply.

Oh then I clamored with my soul  
Against your soul, and mightily  
I felt the thunderous thought waves roll  
And break against your heart, the goal  
Of my poor life's futility.

And so you answered to my will  
What you refused my love; and I  
With love unutterable still,  
Could wish you free again, so ill  
Love brooks captivity.

## ANCIENT FAITH

Oh ancient faith returned again,  
Thou pearl of perfect loveliness,  
For thee no church, no outer fane!  
Upon thy scrolls are names we bless,  
The heroes that our hearts possess,  
Inscribed without a stain.

Within their lives the Presence grows  
And fills them as with precious wine—  
Wine of the Spirit. He who knows  
This vintage hears not “mine and thine.”  
But freely, gladly, as wind blows,  
Pours forth for all the gifts divine.

## THE ELF EXPLAINS

Yea, we dread the boom of church bells  
And the sight of sudden crosses:

Long ago some shining foot-prints  
Were left gleaming in our garden,  
Then a tiny window opened  
And a light beamed high above us,  
He of whom we speak not, think not,  
Leaned forth calling us together,  
All the small forgotten people;  
Magic sang behind his music—  
How we hurried, wee feet twinkling,  
Loose heels clattering, tip-toes squeaking,  
Among the roots, along the caverns;  
Some were weak with bubbling laughter,  
Some were pucker-browed, perplexed  
With the puzzling talk of problems  
Of the harvest-days approaching;  
Deep young eyes like fringed gentian  
Gazed, forgetting their vocation,  
All their happy work of weaving  
Moonbeams through the oak and olive,

While a voice like golden harp-tones  
Showered words upon us waiting:  
“Little people, little people,  
You who shake the leaves all spring-time,  
Guide the vines and wreath the tendrils,  
Bind the ice upon the rivers,  
Dip each flower in varied fragrance  
And who keep the birch a-quiver,  
Would you stay here softly working  
Or come with me and be mortals?”  
Suddenly a sparrow tumbled,  
Fluttered to our swift protection;  
Shrieked for our sweet ministrations;  
So we elves forgot to answer.  
We remained to tend the sparrows,  
We are happy with the woeful.  
And we show the misbegotten  
Some bright things like opals shining,  
And we stir among the grey locks  
Of the bad forgotten women,  
And we fan the smoking brier  
For the old man long-neglected.

But we dread the boom of church bells  
Or the sight of sudden crosses.

## LET ME GO FREE

Let me go free! The morning sunlight flings  
Abroad its glory, every pulse-beat sings  
With every bird on bough  
For every joy of living—Ah not now  
The thoughts of sacrifice and binding vow!  
Listen, the faery winds! Wild roses blow,  
Scenting the hill-side where the great hawk wings  
His splendid way of freedom. Let me go!

The voice is stilled. The evening shadows fall  
Fold upon fold, each ashen, and a pall  
Covers the face of the Beloved at rest;  
Too late I turn for refuge to the breast  
Unfailing until now. Broken my will,  
Like rose-leaves drifting; vagrant breezes call  
From where the death-hawk hovers by the hill.

## JACOB STAINER

Jacob Stainer, violin maker, died in the poor-house at Absam in 1683. He was adjudged mad because he wandered all day long in the forest sounding the pine trees for their key-notes. This is a prison-song to his violin.

Rose of the world I have found you!

Your summons I understood,

Listening and toiling and praying

Deep in the ancient wood;

Rose of most perfect beauty

Released from your prison, the pine,

Ransom of freedom and reason

I yielded to make you mine.

Of colour and sound was my vision,

Pure is your tone as a flower;

Though in your place I am captive,

You are dowered with beauty and power.

I mind not the world's derision;

In this prison your songs divine

Are making the mad-house a heaven—

Rose-voice of the world, you are mine!

*IV.*

*SILVER PINIONS*



## JUDAS

I lie outside thine ancient gate  
    Oh Mary-Mother hear!  
I have forgotten love and hate  
And aching hope and fear—  
Yea, very patiently I wait  
    Through rounding year by year.

The winds of Heaven winnow me,  
    Men pass and disappear;  
I drown not in Thy scornful sea,  
    Thine earth disdains to cover me,  
Thine ice and fire flee my bier  
    Yet faith bides steadfastly.

I brake thy holy Mother-heart  
    And how should'st thou bend near?  
'Tis meet that thou set me apart—  
    Yet One still holds me dear!  
Soon Christ will call "Iscariot"  
    And I "Lord I am here."

## SILVER PINIONS

Silver pinions flying by,  
Circling down this pallid sky  
    Now far—now near,  
How requite thy minstrelsy,  
How repeat thy wizardry  
Changeless through the changing years!

No mortal longing knows  
The way the Fifth Wind blows—  
    Oh fair and fleet!  
Free as the sky or sea  
Float songs of ecstasy,  
Voice of gold and silvery flying feet.

## THE SHEPHERD OF STARS

Beneath thy death-white magic wing  
Hermes, Oh Hermes!  
Thine own disciples live and sing;  
Around us mightier planets fling  
Vain lights from alien skies.

Far overhead thy glory gleams  
Hermes, Oh Hermes!  
To us thy silvery radiance streams  
Real in a world of fleeting dreams  
Where all else fades and dies.

Guide of a myriad quick and dead  
Hermes, Oh Hermes!  
We know thy love's protection spread  
As light along the path we tread  
Across these empty skies.

Beyond the mists of blinding tears,  
Past human woe, past mortal fears,  
Slowly we follow through the years,  
Slowly we rise  
Oh Hermes, Hermes!

## HIS VOICE CALLS

His voice calls ever through our silences,  
He knows our pain will cease;  
Trial by fiery love is of the Master  
And when He wills it, peace.

## RHYMES

Ho, dancing Rhymes in airy dress  
Of fancy's flying phantasies,  
How many times your fleeting chimes  
Ring out to fling us happiness!

Bright elves astride these whirling words,  
Ye ride gay-bridled humming birds  
With double wings—a sweet surprise—  
Or are your steeds twin butterflies?

Float by! We neither know your name,  
Nor why you go nor whence you came,  
Yet some of you are caught—unwise  
Sky visitors, shy butterflies!

## COMPENSATION

Every queen, every slave, sullen or fair  
Has a mate to love—save one—  
Has a lover a mate, her shield her fate,  
But I who am sweet have none;  
Yet for me love gleams on the morning seas  
And breathes from the noon-day pine,  
And the rose-flushed heart of the evening sky  
At the close of the day is mine!  
Oh lovelier ones need I envy now  
Your rose-red joy, your mirth?  
Naught to you is a star-pale brow  
Until it has mixed with earth.

## THE COMMAND

In the beginning we struggled and wandered,  
Long æons we breasted the fathomless deeps of de-  
sire  
Until from the sea-girdled bosom of Mâya The  
Mother  
Most Holy, we dreamed (was it only a dream?)  
Of a voice of Compassion that thrilled through the  
waters of sorrow  
And bade us her sea-spawn, unseeing, unthinking,  
For something we know not lift upward our hearts  
and aspire.

## THE LARK

When the sun is high and the lark afloat  
On wings of joy in the morning sky,  
He pours forth songs from his perfect throat  
And he knows not why.

When the moon goes by and the stars are cold  
And the lark is caged with a broken wing,  
He may live or die with his wrong untold  
But he will not sing.

## FAR-FLUNG

I had no hat so I took my crown—  
The silvriest thing with a magic rim—  
And I tossed it far where the white Pole-Star  
Is regnant over our earth's old moon.

The blue mists rose till my age long foes  
Could crawl from the swamps of the ancient fen,  
And the hurricane came of iron-wrought frame  
And I crept to the door of the Mother again.

The Mother was weaving her children's dresses  
From millions of torn leaves heaped on her knee,  
And her eyes of compassion that saw beyond vision  
Were bent on the tattered bright leaves and on me.

She knew of my loss, my treasure soft-gleaming,  
Far-flung to the giver—adrift in the sea—  
She brought me my bow and the gay golden quiver,  
She bent down the ages and bade me go free.

## THE SWAYING TREE-TOPS

The swaying tree-tops and lilac branches  
And opening violets hail the Eastern Door,  
And long-hushed laughter shakes the morning glories  
Holding some mirthful secret of the days of yore.

The white-wreathed orchards and upland meadows  
Receive the mountain's message from the West,  
And men and flowers and star-eyed worlds unnum-  
bered  
Are foldèd in the evening's heart of rest.

## THE NEOPHYTE

Rose-dawn Glory of the world, sublime and tender,  
Surely comes Thine hour holy when all's well—  
For the morning star of Heaven, swinging slowly,  
Calls to worship ringing clearly down the crystal  
skies!

Still the moment tarries and our hearts lie breaking  
On Thine Altar of the East where darkness dies.

Thy libations drench the world and sky with splen-  
dour,

Torn asunder are the shadow-gates of hell  
And the death-mist parting leaves the bare soul  
shaking—

Life and Death are one, Thou Lord of joy in Sacrifice!  
Hail triumphant! Now a myriad souls surrender—  
We have seen our Lord of Light and Love arise.



*V.*

*THE HERMETIC HYMN*



## THE HERMETIC HYMN

*To know, to will,  
To dare, and to keep silent.*

The light is on each morning's sea  
    Hail Hermes!

Thy music measures forth our days—  
The unknown glory of thy ways;  
We must obey for love of thee;  
Take thou our wills, naught else have we—  
These echoing harp-strings break. Set free  
We look up to thy Sun and say  
    “Hail Hermes!”

Thou art too wonderful for praise,  
Hail Hermes!  
Oh comforter of lonely tears,  
Shepherd of rainbow-haloed years,  
Thy silence gives the sense of thee.  
We would obey to learn thy ways,  
To know and guard thy secrecy,  
To will and dare thy mystery—  
Thy peace, Lord Hermes!

## THE BUTTERFLY

The Butterfly hath spread her wings  
Of elves' device and heraldry—  
This is the first of all the springs  
For her beneath the April sky;  
Wistfully to the Rose she clings—  
Ah butterfly, fair butterfly!

How is it when the North Wind sings  
His thin ear-piercing lullaby?  
These be strange garlands Winter brings  
To cover graves where roses lie—  
Dead drifting petals, withered wings  
Ah butterfly, frail butterfly!

## THE RAINBOW

The storm raged till the day was spent,  
A cold wind lashed the bitter sea;  
Said Hate “I will not rest content  
Till God is judge ‘twixt her and me.”

The first flush of the day-dawn spread  
In amber ripples o'er the sea,  
A rainbow path to Heaven led;  
“God's peace” Love prayed “twixt her and me.”

## PRAIRIE CHANT

Miles upon hundreds of miles of billowy fields of alfalfa  
Enfolded with infinite calm, undulating forever and ever,  
A stillness in glorious motion; the song of the silence arises  
The chant of the Earth-Mother mounts to the Listening Ones.

Her prophecy floods every day-dawn,  
Her sunsets spread banners of triumph,  
Her sweetness and strength make the noon-tide.  
Her breath is the deep peace of mid-night;  
With the freedom of endless horizons  
She moves in her green and gold mantle.  
Hers is the secret of ages,  
Of cycles of wisdom forgotten  
The stars to the Chaldeans told it,  
The Sphinx in her silence proclaimed it.  
Low-bent at her loom in the darkness  
She changes corruption to verdure,  
Content she weaves shadows of substance  
To serve in the courts of creation;  
From her knees the majestic processions  
Move on through the many-roomed mansions—  
From seedlings to stars they mount upward  
The white Milky Way to the Great One.

## THE DAY WANES

The day wanes and the light grows dim,  
Cloud flowers of the west  
Drift to the sunset's brimming rim,  
And stars sing low their vesper hymn  
And earth gives thanks for rest.

## THE HIGH CODE

Her thoughts that go so straight and far  
Past silent star and singing star,  
Flashing light softly overhead  
This station of the waiting dead.

Selfless each message, gay as the sun;  
Moon-sweet, star fleet, true, so none  
Of life's malicious dreams can be—  
God guides her work thus steadfastly.

As pine breath sweet, as mountain snow,  
Her thoughts gleam as the four winds blow;  
God gives her the uncomforted,  
Frozen of heart and restless dead.

## THE POEM

Within my heart in the still grey space  
We know when our eye-lids close,  
I saw an unborn Poem's face  
Sweet as a small white rose.

“I pray you let me pass” it said,  
“Into the world of men;  
Thy brow will be so garlanded  
That thy heart will forget her pain.”

Within my heart in that strange grey place  
—Waiting—with outstretched hands,  
For never now will its prayer find grace,  
My little white Poem stands.

## THEY SAY HE LIES ASLEEP

They say he lies asleep  
Beneath the sedge grass where the sea-winds sweep  
In widening circles through the wistful night;  
And armies fighting pass and clear stars creep  
With steadfast gentleness across the sky.  
I wait and watch the sea-gulls' lonely flight—  
Men dead or living know not how we weep,  
God will not let us die!

## VOICES

Love, how the linden murmureth!  
*Thou hearest this and not my cry?*  
Sweet and cool is the forest breath—  
*Cold and sweet is the kiss of Death,*  
*Mine Own!*

Fair are the young leaves over-head,  
*Last year's leaves are beneath thy feet,*  
If one might hear what the breezes said!  
*If one might rest among the dead*

*Alone.*

Love, look up at the glad New Year!  
*A year may hold a man's despair—*  
High overhead our skies shine clear.  
*Look not back lest the Past appear—*

*Our own!*

Clouds are coming across the sky,  
*Thou, not I, wilt have storms to fear,*  
Clouds but pass as in days gone by;  
*Storms will come and the fierce winds sigh*

*And moan.*

What is this that the winds repeat?  
*Words we spoke ere our year had flown.*  
Why are thy red lips pale, my Sweet?  
*Because thou are mine and thy light heart's beat*

*Is still mine own.*

## UNDERSTANDING

Forever we were but a breath,  
But a word or a look apart;  
You waited too late, well-beloved,  
Death knocked at my heart.

And now that I leave not your side  
The word—or the look to divine,  
I know that your love undescried  
Was my life—Heart of Mine!

*VI.*

*THE STILL LIGHT*



## WHY DOST THOU SMILE

Why dost thou smile, oh Dreaming One!  
Close nestled at my knee?  
*A silvery star-path red in the sun!*  
But what is that to thee?  
*On my white road a white bird sowed*  
*Seed of a tall black tree.*

Oh downy brow, why frownest thou,  
Why catchest thou thy side?  
*My brothers tread a pathway red*  
*Dreadfully far from me!*  
*The heavy load—the sharpened goad*  
*Under the dark tree's leafless bough—*  
*Mother, can such woe be?*

## THE RELEASE

My lady hath built of her thoughts a tower,  
(Love lies waiting in wild sedge-grasses)  
Barriers of dreams she hath made for her bower  
Where Time like a sentry passes.

She faces the gales of the Past, eyes wet,  
(Salt o' the sea far-flying, stinging)  
Love from the heart of a white violet  
Looks forth low-singing.

She hath hidden her window with tapestries,  
(Love leans guiding a rose cloud-prow)  
Fear and close-folden grey phantasies  
Shroud her white brow.

Her tower hath never a drawbridge way—  
    But Love is re-weaving one  
Of warm breast-feathers and rainbows gay,  
Of glittering tears from the years far flung,  
By a myriad thoughts and prayer-threads hung  
    High above worlds astray.

Like a wild eagle, Love the true lover,  
Strives with the storms of her yesteryear;  
Drives through the clouds till the stars uncover  
    Dawn, and the wide sky clear!

My Lady hath chosen the mystic way,  
    (Happily Love leads on)  
Shining she goeth in Love's array,  
Sure as the joy of earth at day  
My Lady hath followed her own star-ray  
    Straight to the hidden sun.

## LOOSEN THESE KNOTS

Loosen these knots that I have tangled so—  
Lift Thou my brother's burden that I could not bear!  
Master I can but worship, can but know  
That Thou wilt pray for me and be my prayer.

## FLEET, SO FLEET

Fleet, so fleet  
That my footsteps left hardly a trace,  
I fled over the desolate hill of snow  
To the house of the well-beloved in the evening glow.  
I made me a prayer to the Lord of all Love that we  
know,  
And I sang out of rapture that he had so given this  
grace,  
That her cry in the silence had brought me  
Across all that stillness and space  
To bring laughter and peace to her face—  
Sweet, so sweet.

Still so still  
That I loitered and listened in fear—  
Row upon row the mountains were kneeling in prayer,  
The clouds of compassion hung low in the clear  
stinging air  
And each star as it broke through the dusk was a tear,  
The prairie wind blew like the wind of the sea  
And I whispered “White Glory of Loving grant  
courage to me!  
‘Grant courage to battle this presage of ill  
‘And swiftness to follow thy will.”

## ELF SONG

What are those things that mortals see,  
Why go they bowed with care?  
We scurry by them hurriedly,  
Their tears we will not share.

The dried leaves fall from every tree,  
The new green leaves were fair—  
Aslant we see them tremblingly  
Drift down the evening air.

We have no elfin motherling  
To sing when sunlight dies,  
To kiss us when the church bells ring  
And star-dew stings our eyes.

Above there is great shepherding  
Of stars steadfast and wise,  
While free from flower to flower we swing  
And jeer with mocking cries.

No thoughts of men we understand,  
Such faith and oaths they swear!  
We've flitted over sea and land  
And change was everywhere.

## SONNET OF COURAGE

As when against the ocean's wrath one rows  
Singing through gulfs of death, so valiantly  
Each one's deific will from chaos grows  
To strength immortal, ruling sea and sky.  
Little he reaps who in the sea-field sows;  
We will sow thoughts as stars, flinging them high,  
Death disregarding; God within each knows  
The harvest-time of peace and victory;  
Failure and triumph, life and death proclaim  
This faith divine—We sons of God aspire  
Freely to keep inviolate His flame—  
This moaning ocean shall be Hermes' Lyre!  
Shepherd of stars and men we chant Thy name  
Among a myriad swinging worlds of fire.

## THE FORGING

The Master toils by the anvil fires  
At the white-hot core of the earth;  
He is making a song to the anvil-beat,  
The flames and the vapours wreath his feet  
And the smoke of the world's desires.

He shapes and he breaks at the burning pyres  
As he forges for death or birth;  
His Life for our lives in the fierce white heat—  
And the look in his tender eyes is sweet  
By the forge at the heart of the earth.

## THE STILL LIGHT

The sun and stars have dropped away,  
    Have dropped away like human tears;  
There is no breath of coming morn,  
No echoing of yesterday,  
    No hopes—no fears.

Chaos waits motionless, forlorn,  
    The pulsing of the Mighty Breath  
Sunken to rhythms æons slow;  
The will-to-be is deep indrawn  
    Past life and death.

Still brooding over endless space  
    Where nothing is—below—above,  
Beyond where dreams of gods may go  
Remains the still light on the face  
    Of Love.

## POSTPONEMENT

So drenched with tears our love has grown,  
So soon our love must die;  
We may not claim it for our own  
Beneath this changing sky;  
We can but suffer each alone  
Know it and pass it by.

Tall lilies blow in Paradise;  
Look up, Most Dear, and see  
How fair and fairest to our eyes  
Love waits for you and me—  
Not lost but Heaven-kept for us  
Safe in Eternity.

## THE GIFT OF THE ROSE

Gold dust of the Yellow Rose,  
Deep hidden wealth in wisdom's mine!  
Men have forgotten, so none knows  
Aught of thine ancient rich design.

Flush Dawn-Rose, a loving cup  
For pledge of faith from earth to sky,  
Dew-filled to brim is lifted up  
Expectant of Thy victory.

Even the wide heaven-floor  
May not the Red Rose-glory span,  
Blood of the sacrificed heart's core  
Shed by the Son of Man.

Breath of fair thoughts of His mind,  
To poet-children wing-and-wing  
Float White Rose-perfumes, sweet and kind,  
And rest upon the songs they sing.



*VII.*

*WINGS OF FLAME*



## THE SUMMER DAY

The Song of Summer fills the air to-day  
With peace through prayer made perfect; all last  
night

The yearning forest prayed against the sky  
With arms uptossed by tempests, till the dawn  
Grey-eyed and sweet, with trailing draperies,  
Crept softly to the woods with torch alight  
And flung the fire of sunshine on the trees!

All nature feels the rapturous delight:  
The woods new shriven sing for happiness,  
Joy glistens from innumerable leaves,  
Joy pierces through the robin's lordly call,  
The dew drenched grasses whisper of content,  
And meditative bees in monotone  
Muse loudly of their wealth from clover fields.

Time troubles not these placid forest glades  
With devastating touch, but they are stirred  
By musical far-wandering little winds  
Piping their way down hazy distances,  
Laughing along the innocent small leaves,  
Curling the fronds of exquisite pale ferns  
With breaths of summer sweetness blown astray.

The quiet pulses of the day have passed  
The splendour of the lengthening afternoon;  
Among the tender murmurs of the leaves  
Full weary little winds caress the feet  
Of sleepy birds on slowly swaying boughs,  
Till past the sunset on the purple hills,  
Enfolded in deep peace, the twilight comes.

## **KUEN - LUN**

He dwells they say at Kuen-Lun,  
He whom all men would look upon,  
His arms laid by the battle won;  
Between rose-dawn and setting sun  
What light remains in Kuen-Lun?

Is it some village of the snows  
Or hidden city old and strange  
Or high peak of the higher Range  
Or shepherd's hut the ewe lamb knows?

My heart dwells evermore on this—  
He knows each swift thought-sacrifice,  
The woe we gave returns our bliss.  
There is this thing to think upon—  
They say the gods built Kuen-Lun.

## I WILL NOT FEAR THIS SPACE

I will not fear this Space  
Chaos, nowhere to cling!  
On outspread wing,  
Dauntless and clear I sing,  
Lonely I seek Thy face.

## WINGS OF FLAME

With eyes of fire and wings of flame  
Into my heart one day Love came,  
Crowned as king of my heart's desire.

Swift as the daydawn, unaware  
Yet unsought of my heart's white prayer,  
Love's breath blew on my heart's still fire.

With wings afold and eyes downcast  
Out of my heart one day Love passed;  
Cold my heart where the ashes lay.

“Nay,” I said to my heart's despair,  
“Love's voice silenced my heart's white prayer—  
Best for my heart Love went his way.”

## FORGOTTEN FIRES

The silent fountains of Castalia  
Scatter no more their tinted spray;  
The blue mists rise no more at Delphi,  
The swans of spring have flown away,  
The light resplendent of those first dawnings  
Breaks only now to common day.  
Oh, for that morn when Dionysus  
Smote Heaven's fire from earthly clay!

## THE GUARDIAN'S VOICE

I am old with the woes of my helpless; you pray and  
you slay in your praying!

The barriers built up between you—the prisons  
wherein you are starving—

The palaces, hovels, oppressions,—yet daring to ask  
for His coming.

Should He come, would you know Him I wonder?  
Within and without is the PRESENCE

But lift up your eyes and behold Him—His look in  
the eyes of the loving,

He waits in the hearts of your brothers rose veining  
of thought within matter.

For never the archangels choiring before the Most  
Holy of Holies

Can touch the white robe of the Master can feel the  
compassion incarnate

So closely as you in your sorrow so keenly as you in  
repentance.

Forever the spirit illumines—but lift up the veil of  
your vision,  
The seven-fold veiling of spirit and know that the  
radiance holy  
Spread lavishly crimson and golden from the heart  
to the verge of creation  
Is the dawn of to-day—in your keeping.

## SHINING MYSTERY

I float between the sun and moon,  
Soft wrapped in shining mystery;  
The earth life bruised my fluttering wings  
So these more fleet were given me.

Star lilies fill this sky lagoon  
With breath of heavenly ecstasy,  
And night and day and glorious noon  
Are here but one vast symphony.

## THE GIFT

Had I the power to make, Beloved,  
Your dearest dreams come true,  
Woven of hues of fairy land  
Gleaming with fire and dew  
As sea shells tinted—as rainbow-spanned,  
Perfect each hour anew—  
These were not beautiful enough,  
Beloved, for you!

A white fire lives within my heart—  
Hidden from outer <sup>~</sup>things,  
No mortal longings enter here,  
No stir of fairy wings,  
The cadenced thought-waves disappear  
Until the Silence sings—  
This gift (not mine to give, Beloved)  
No human lover brings.

## UNDINE TO THE EARTH-CHILD

What do they matter—right or wrong,  
Joy or grief, or that curious fire  
Wild as the winds of the hurrying sea  
Men call desire?

I instead of a soul am a song,  
A restless breath of the ocean-lyre;  
Your earth-born thoughts are naught to me  
Or your hidden fire!

The tides out there where the phosphor gleams  
Hold the sea and the earth apart.  
Why do you blame me then? It seems  
That you have been fashioned to doubt your dreams  
And I without a heart.

## DEATH SONG

Oh prophecy of ecstasy,  
Dream realized but now!  
Was this the lovely brooding thing  
That sang low from each lilac bough,  
That rang so clear through calls of spring  
Presage of all that Life might be?  
Ah, Breath of pure dawn-melody  
Blown sweet upon my shroud,  
You herald gladder wakening  
Than ever earth allowed—  
At last to know why planets sing  
Their choral song of mystery!

This Special Limited Edition of the  
*Poems of Lucile du Pré*, printed on  
watermarked Strathmore Alexandra  
Antique paper, each copy numbered,  
consists of Two Hundred and Fifty  
Copies, of which this is

*Number 20.*











